

MIGUEL MARTINEZ
COUNCIL MEMBER, 10TH DISTRICT

10TH DISTRICT OFFICE
601 WEST 174TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10033
(917) 521-2146
FAX (917) 521-1293

CITY HALL OFFICE
220 BROADWAY, 13TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007
(212) 984-7633

www.councilmember10nyc.org



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July 9, 2014

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am concerned that the FCC is considering issuing a ruling that would force higher prices on phone services utilized by working families and economically disadvantaged minority households throughout my constituency, Council District 10 in Washington Heights.

In particular, I understand that the FCC may impose in-state access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. It is important for you to know that my constituents rely upon reasonably-priced prepaid calling cards for a number of communications needs. The FCC should not levy new charges on these services; such action would cause direct harm by raising the cost of making a phone call.

District 10 in Washington Heights is nearly 85% Latino and contains a large immigrant and low-income community. We have worked hard to promote economic development in my district in the last several years, but many of these individuals still do not have a strong credit history or bank accounts, let alone the cash to make the hefty deposit needed to subscribe to local telephone service. As a result, prepaid calling cards are the **only** option they have for talking to their family, employers, and other people we often take for granted as being only a phone call away.

Low-income and minority households would be particularly hard hit by these increases. More than half of households earning less than \$20,000 per year have used calling cards, as have 70% of African-American and over 40% of Latino households.

Quite simply, driving up the cost of pre-paid calling cards would have an immediate impact up on Washington Heights and my constituents. I strongly urge you to refrain from imposing new access charges and fees on these important services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Miguel Martinez', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Miguel Martinez

Council Member, 10th District

cc: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton